



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Jewel Cave
National Monument

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Jewel Cave National Monument News Release

Release Date: September 20, 2013

For Immediate Release

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Jewel Cave Celebrates New Visitor Center Exhibits with Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

JEWEL CAVE NATIONAL MONUMENT, SD – New visitor center exhibits are cause for celebration at Jewel Cave National Monument. With the successful completion of a two-year interpretive project, park staff are hosting a ribbon cutting ceremony on Thursday, September 26 at 1:00 p.m.

Featured speakers include Deputy Regional Director Patty Trap of the National Park Service Midwest Region, South Dakota Secretary of Tourism Jim Hagen, and early cave explorer Jan Conn. Additional speakers include Jewel Cave Superintendent Larry Johnson, Executive Director Steve Baldwin of the Black Hills Parks and Forests Association, and Executive Director Dave Ressler of the Custer Area Chamber of Commerce.

Over 2500 square feet of exhibit space within the visitor center was remodeled this summer, engaging visitors with interpretive displays, artistic wall murals, and life-size dioramas. Visitors interact in multiple ways within the exhibitry, such as crawling through a cave passage, using listening wands to hear caving stories, and exploring the cave map through a touchscreen monitor. The new displays and interpretive panels cover a wide-range of park stories, yet the thematic focus resounds of exploration and discovery.

Superintendent Johnson states, “We are thrilled to host such a special event and showcase our new interpretive exhibits. And, to have such an outstanding slate of guest speakers sharing our success is humbling. Most importantly, we are excited to be able to provide so many great improvements to the visitor experience at Jewel Cave.”

The \$512,000 exhibit project was funded entirely from cave tour ticket fees. 100 percent of the revenue generated from ticket sales stays at the monument for use toward projects that offer visitor benefits. Johnson further comments, “We were able to build up our revenue each year, allowing the project to be funded and constructed with minimal disruption to our visitors. Considering that the original displays had not changed since 1972, we felt compelled to enhance our visitors’ experience through updated exhibits. It has been gratifying to see our visitors spending quality time in the facility and complementing their cave tour with the new displays.”

Using design guidance and interpretive themes provided by park staff, an exhibit team at Harpers Ferry Interpretive Design Center of the National Park Service managed the project. Split Rock Studios of St. Paul, Minnesota crafted the overall design, fabricated the exhibits, and installed the displays. Local area subcontractors included Freeman Electric, Svensson Construction, and Studt Construction in Custer.

For more information about Jewel Cave National Monument, please contact the visitor center at 605-673-8300 or visit the monument online at www.nps.gov/jeca. The visitor center is currently open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. MT.

Over

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Visitors experience hidden interpretive messages by exploring and discovering the new exhibits at Jewel Cave National Monument. What appears to be a hairy woodpecker on a fire scarred tree is actually a handle to learn about what lives inside a snag.

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